10232-106th.St,
Edmonton.
March 18.1945.

Dear Mr.Gard:

In one of my few moments of respite, I have been able to prepare a few items of interest, as taken from my new publication "West Nor'west", and which will be off the press (Institute of Applied Arts,Edmonton)in June or July of this year.

If it is of any use to you, you are at liberty to use it in the Quarterly. These are but a few incidents of note in the book, and I must confess, that I have had no time to edit the pages,being that I am so busy. If you use it, will you do the editing for me?

Congratulations on your "Folklore Quarterly". It is a very valuable contribution to the History of Alberta, and I wish you every success with it. Thank you for the copy which I received a few days ago, and I can assure you that I intend to contribute to it by being a subscriber.

Please forgive me for being so abrubt, but I really am busy.

Yours very truly,

J. D. Horan

History or Folklore:

In the first edition of the new publication of Alberta Folklore, I read with great delight, tales that are both historical and entertaining, so, being a collector of historical incidents in our own province, I believe that there are many who would be interested in learning a few of the things which have been so graciously donated to me.

Dr, McRae, in his History of Alberta, stated that Alberta did not have a history. Maybe it didn't at that time, but today it has a wonderful history. The missionary, the mountie, the prospector, the farmer and the rancher contributed to this history, and today, you and I are doing our little bit towards it.

Many strange things have happened in Alberta, call them what you will - history or folklore - they happened and that is what matters. Everything connected with this province of ours had--to quote our great leader Hon. Winston Churchill--Blood, Sweat, or Tears -connected with it. There have been many tragic days in the lives of our pioneers, and there have been many humorous ones. I will endeavour to relate some of the humorous kind being that we are having our quota of sorrow at the present time, and will begin with that famous character of the '70s, "Fred the Ratter".

It is not definately known when this gentleman first came into what is now Alberta, but, Ed. Maunsell, one of the original pathfinders the N.W.M.Police, told the Calgary Herald that Fred the Ratter, shared a squatters rights with Doug Allison, also an ex-mountie, in the vicinity of Fort Macleod, in the late '70s. He also told of some of the exploits of this man - of the time he quit ranching and took a position as cook with the I.G. Baker Co, Freighters and Merchants, of Fort Benton, Montana, and Fort Macleod, Alberta.

Fred owed a small debt to a party in Fort Benton, and

J.J.Healey, the all efficient guardian of the law in that little frontier town, was asked to collect the said debt. Now Mr.Healey, was a huge man - weighing more than 200 lbs, and standing more than six feet in his stocking feet. Whereas, Fred the Ratter, was a poor little puny specimen of humanity, barely five feet tall, and positively not more than I50 lbs. But Fred the Ratter was as strong as two sheriffs. Unfortunately, Mr.Healey did not know this,for,as he sauntered towards the cookhouse of the Baker outfit, he asked where he would find:"That 'sawed-off'Englishman".

Some of the off-duty freighters who were lounging around the cookhouse, answered:"You'll find him in the kitchen. He's preparing dinner".

It happened that these freighters knew about the debt, and could guess why the Anerican sheriff was paying a visit to their cook..

Healey opened the door of the cookhouse and walked inside. he closed the door behind him, and for a few minutes everything was peaceful and quite. One of the loungers remarked:It looks as though Healey is collecting in a nice peaceful manner",but, no sooner had he spoken, than the silence was broken by the sound of breaking dishes and overthrown furniture. This weny on for a few seconds and then a loud scream of rage pierced the walls of the kitchen. The lounger remarked: Looks as though the sheriff's going to get his money the hard way:. Aother loud scream, but this time it was a scream of pain not anger, and the lounger said: Well boys; Sheriff or no sheriff, he's going a little too far. He's not going to kill our cook if I can help it". with a rush they burst into the kitchen, and imagine their surprise when, instead of finding Fred the Ratter gasping for his last breath, thay found sheriff Healey, perched on top of the hot stove screaming his head off.

During the rough and tumble, Fred had caught the unwary sheriff around the middle, and with one heave, had placed him where the kettle should have been. I might add, it was a sad and sore man who departed for the more peaceful surroundings of Fort Benton, a few weeks later.

He was but one of the early pranksters of the Southern part of Alberta. Another was Harry "Kamous" Taylor, the missionary who turned whiskey smuggler and Indian trader. There are many tales associated with Mr.Taylor, but I believe the one about the way he fooled the Indian chief - his future father-in-law - is the prize winner of all.

Taylor wanted a wife, and the object of his affection was the comely daughter of a Blackfoot chief. Loaded up with the usual wedding presents, to wit - a horse. two pairs of blankets and a liberal supply of good tobacco, Taylor paid a visit to the chief and asked for the daughter in marriage. Possibly the old chief didn't wish to be encumbered with a white son-in-law, (especially an Englishman,) so he refused to grant the white mans request. He didn't have a very good opinion of Taylor, and undoubtedly, he failed to notice the gleam in the trader's eye ere he left the camp. Taylor had taken note of which teepee housed the girl of his dreams, and that night, covered with the hide of a huge dog(which had so conveniently died that day) and walking on all fours, he crept towards the noted teepee unharmed and unchallenged.

It was not many moons after this that the young lady became the lawfully wedded; Mrs. Harry Taylor, and Harry earned a new name, "Kamous" which in Blackfeet, means "Woman Stealer", and in English, is supposed to mean "Highwayman"or Robber.

The south was not the only place where the prankster became fabulous. In the Edmonton District, there lived a man etc.

But did you ever hear about Charlie Bremner, after whom , the thriving farming community to the east of Edmonton was named-? Well he was expelled from the elite and sedate'Edmonton Club'because he rode his saddle horse into the lounge. Or about the Frenchman,M. Meunier, who ranged his cattle in the Mosside district, and greeted all homesteaders with a gun lying across his saddle;-and how he fondled this gun as he told the land-seekers that "This land is my pasture" He fooled everybody except the big Swede,"Ole"Olson, who told him to put the bullet there, and he pointed to his own chest. But Meunier, did not pull the trigger. He pulled stakes instead, and the settlers moved in"en masse".

I wish, for the future reference of Alberta writers, that some of the oldtimers who are still with us, would contribute by telling of some other interesting incidents, and unless these people who were fortunate enough to be alive and in this province forty, fifty, sixty and even seventy years ago - tell us of these things, the real history of the West will be lost forever, and then we may as well agree with Dr.McRae - Alberta has no history.

DPR 13W45

I0232-I06th.St.,
Edmonton,
April I4.I945.

Dear Mr.Gard;

Eclosed, you will find a few more items which may interest you, As you know, Edmonton is I50 years old now and we have every reason to celebrate, so I am telling why we should celebrate.

All material contained herein, is taken from my new book, "West Nor'west".

If it is of any value to you, go ahead and use it if you so desire, I am sorry that time does not permit me to contribute more extensively to your research, however, we are uncertain of the future and who knows what might happen.

Yours truly,
J.W.Horan.

Edmonton

FROM TRADING POST TO CAPITOL.

This year , I945 , is the one-hundred and fiftieth birthday of the City of Edmonton, Alberta, ~~and~~ so, the local Chamber of Commerce is throwing a birthday party. It should be a grand affair too, for this modern city has come a long way in a short time.

There will be parades, floats and more parades. This is compulsory if we are to make a historical picture of Edmonton's kaleiodoscopical past. If this is achieved, we will look upon Antony Hendry, the young English outlaw, who sailed up the "Kis-Sis-Katchewan Sepie"- the Rapid Waters of the Crees- in I754. Of course it is not definately known if he set foot on what is now the seat of the Alberta government, but in his records, he states that he camped at a location eight hundred and ten miles west of York Factory, and that is specifically in the Edmonton locality.

However, if they overlook friend Hendry, they will have to remember that In I788, the North West Company of Montreal, founded a trading post at a location,east of what is now Edmonton. Six years later, they established another post - Fort Augustus - about twenty fives miles east of Edmonton.

Their success fired the ambition of their rivals- the Hudson's Bay Company - and this company opened a post in opposition to them, a few yards away. There was bad blood between these two rival companies; but nevertheless, this rivalry was overcome in I82I and the two companies amalgamated and became one - The Hudson's Bay Company.

We must bear in mind that the west and north-west, was won at a terrible cost. The westland was inhabited by the most warlike tribes of Indians on the North American continent - the Blackfeet's,

the monarchs of the prairie.

The Blackfeet were engaged in constant warfare with the more peaceful Crees of the north, and although the traders were not allowed to establish their posts in Blackfeet territory, all nations of the southland - the Sarcees, Bloods, Peigans and Blackfeet proper, visited the trading posts which were located in Cree territory. There were many battles between the various tribes and on numerous occasions, the traders were in peril of their lives. Things came to climax in in 1807. The warlike Blackfeet, intent on murdering all white men in the country, raided the two posts and after looting them, set the torch to them. The occupants escaped somehow, and in the following year new posts were established om the site of the present site of the city of Edmonton. The Indians were still on the rampage, and historical records tell us that horse stealing was the favourite pastime, and fearful that history would be repeated in the near future, the traders moved to a new location at White Earth Creek, about 125 miles east. Trading in this locality was not very satisfactory. The Crees would not travel so far away, and it was decided to return to the old location at Edmonton. This was in 1819.

John Rowand, factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, added to the old fort. He stated that he did not intend to let the Indians destroy this fort as they had done at Sturgeon River; He boasted that the new Fort Edmonton would be the most important establishment west of York Factory. When it was completed, it was an elaborate affair, three hundred and ten feet long, by two hundred and ten feet wide - surrounded by a pallisade twenty feet high, complete with battlemented gateways and bastions surmounted with cannon. Rowand declared that the fort would stand forever. Little did he think that his boast would come true.

Many notable travellers stopped off at Edmonton House, and among them were Alexander Henry, ~~in 1810~~, Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Captain John Palliser and Dr. James Hector of the Palliser Expedition, Lord Southesk and Lord Milton. When Sir. George Simpson arrived in August, 1841, he was greeted by nine Blackfeet Chiefs bedecked in all their finery of beads and feathers. These chiefs besought the governor to grant that their horses might always be swift; that the buffalo might always be abundant, and that their women might live long and always look young. This gives one an idea of the power of the Hudson's Bay Co, in the eyes of the Indian.

Christianity came into the westland in September 1838, when the Roman Catholic Priests, Father Norbert Blanchet, and Father Modeste Demers, passed through the massive gates of the Old Fort, en-route to the Pacific coast. Alas, these pilgrims stayed but for three or four days. Mr. Rowand, the Factor, was a Dublin-born (Ireland) Roman catholic, and his clerks and assistants were of French-Canadian extraction, so we can be assured that the priests received a royal welcome. Mass was served in the big house, and the holy men constructed, erected and blessed a huge wooden cross inside the stockade. This was the first semblence of christianity west of Fort Garry, and east of Vancouver. It is hard for us to believe that this was only little more than a century ago.

In September 1840, Rev. Robert Rundle, a native of Lincoln England, arrived at Fort Edmonton, and this gentleman with the able assistance of the Rev. James Evans, laid the foundation of the Methodist church in the west. In 1852, the memorable "Pere" Lacombe, entered the old fort, and a few years later, he built the first church, a Roman Catholic chapel inside the stockade. The R.Cs, had established missions just outside the present city limits years before

Father Lacombe was asked to establish a school within the confines of the Fort, and in I862, the first school west of Fort Garry, was held inside the tiny log chapel at Fort Edmonton. Constantine Scollan, a lay brother, was the first teacher, and his pupils who were all children of the fort employees, numbered twenty This school was closed in or about I868.

Brother Scollan, was born at Newton Butler, County Fermanagh, Ireland, and he taught school at Inchicore near Dublin before he sailed for Canada. No wonder the Irish are a proud people. The real founder of Edmonton was a native of Dublin, and Edmonton's first teacher was an Irishman,so it goes.

Other religious organizations sent their missionaries to the region in later years - the Anglican Church,represented by Rev. William Newton, was founded in Edmonton in I875. The Rev. Mr. A.B.Baird of the Presbyterian "Kirk", arrived on Nov.29,I88I. and Rev.Mr.Mellick, of the Baptist Church, arrived in May I892.

The North-West Mounted Police came to Edmonton on October 27.I874, and the first legal hanging in the North West Territories, took place five years later. The culprit was an Indian- "Swift Runner" who was charged with, and found guilty of murdering eight memebers of his family. However,he not only murdered these people - he ate the bodies -.This might help to give the reader an impression of the kind of citizens who inhabited the Edmonton vicinity only sixty-five years ago.

Although the Edmonton School District did not come into existance until I885, the initial school (not the one established by Father Lacombe) had been opened four years previously. There was one teacher only,at the time - to day, there are 68 schools, one university, and I46 churches within the Edmonton City limits.

In I845, Father de Smet, a Jesuit priest who was en-route to the pacific coast, counted 30 people

route to the Pacific coast, counted 90 people within the confines of the fort. That was only I00 years ago. In I898, at the time of the Klondyke "Rush", the estimated population was about 2,200. but there was a tremendous jump during the next fifteen years, and in I9I2, the joint populance of Edmonton and Strathcona, was given as being 53,6II.

Settlers were drawn into the district in the early'60s, when miners discovered gold-bearing black-sand on the North Saskatchewan River. Many of these miners earned as much as $20. per day panning gold, and it has been said that Tom Clover, made as high as $50.,on some days

Farmers were attracted to the future capitol in the '70s and grain grown in the region was exhibited by Matthew McCauley, at the Worlds Fair in I88I. These samples won numerous prizes.

The growth of Edmonton was slow but sure until the days of the Klondyke rush, Those memorable days of '98, really put the town on the map. New establishments came into being overnight, stores were built, industries were born, and untold wealth poured into the locality. Today, there is practically every kind of industry in Edmonton,- Foundries, Mines, Lumber yards and Sash and Door factories, Packing Plants, Dairies and what have you?.

The"American Invasion"of I942, helped the capitol city considerably in many ways. Thousands of our friends from the U.S.A., were given a grand welcome into our hearts and homes. An imminent attack by the Japanese, demanded that Alaska and the west coast be fortified; This meant the construction of the now famous Alaska Highway, and the equally famous Canol Pipe Line from Fort Norman, N.W.T., to Whitehorse, Y.K.. Offices were opened in Edmonton, and to provide this office space, Mills Motors, Edmonton Motors, General Motors, Healy Motors, The Edmonton

Curling Club, the Empire Theatre and the basement of the First Presbyterian Church, were requisitioned by the American contractors and the United States War Department. In addition to this, Bechtel. Price & Callahan, civilian constructors of the Canol Project, erected a magnificant "California Redwood" structure at II2th Street and Jasper Avenue. Enormous warehouses were built at Calder and Jasper Place, and "Igloo" houses dotted the city. Very few of our American neighbors are with us today, but their influence will always be with us. During their brief stay in Edmonton, the city's population reached an all-time record of more than I30,000, but, we must remember that about 25,000, were transient, The U.S.A. War Department also constructed a monstrous airport, a few miles north of the city limits. They realized that Edmonton, apart from being the "Gateway to the North", was also the "Crossroads of the World". They, with us, were confident of Edmonton's future.

So now you see what Edmonton has achieved during the past I50 years; aren't we entitled to celebrate? The only trouble is - the Chamber of Commerce will be unable to re-enact every little thing that has added to the greatness of our fair city, but you can rest assured that they will have a darn good try.

J.W.Horan